



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 10, 2006

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Inglewood Mortuary Faces 45-Day Suspension in Settlement Agreement

SACRAMENTO -- Simpson Family Mortuary will close for 45 days and pay nearly \$30,000 as part of a settlement with the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) over a number of violations of state funeral regulations at the Inglewood business.

The mortuary began its suspension on February 9, 2006. A three-year, 10 ½-month probation period will follow, during which the business will be required to file quarterly declarations with DCA's Cemetery and Funeral Bureau stating that it has been following all the conditions of probation. The funeral director's license of the owner, Curtis Simpson Sr., will also be suspended and placed on probation for the same period. Failure to follow the conditions of probation could lead to revocation of both licenses.

"We feel the settlement is fair," said DCA Director Charlene Zettel. "It protects the public and underscores how serious the violations at Simpson Family Mortuary were."

Among the most serious violations were more than 700 unlicensed embalmings performed at the mortuary between May 2003 and April 2004. Mr. Simpson, as the managing funeral director, signed off on the death certificates.

The settlement requires the mortuary to reimburse a consumer \$8,500 for two pre-need funeral agreements that were never deposited into a trust fund as required by law. It also requires Simpson to repay the Bureau \$20,000 to cover the cost of the state's investigation.

The other violations include unsanitary conditions at the business, and failure to exhibit displays or make disclosures required by law to protect consumers. The mortuary also failed to properly ensure the privacy of human remains by allowing a non-employee to take photographs of a body in a preparation room, two of which were published in a newspaper in 2004.

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In its April 6, 2005, Accusation, the Bureau also notes a lengthy list of disciplinary actions against the mortuary and Mr. Simpson going back to the mid-'90s.

DCA's Cemetery and Funeral Bureau licenses and regulates the California funeral and cemetery industries. It also investigates complaints against funeral homes, crematories, state-licensed cemeteries and individual licensees. For more information, visit www.cfb.ca.gov.

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